



THE SEMINARIAN

VOLUME XXXI

December 10, 1979

Issue 10

PLASTIC NATIVITY

So young a child dressed in commercial prose,
pink cheeks defiled by rag spun clothes
and snowfaked lashes and hollow eyes,
and breath that thrashes throat's empty cries.

Concave cheeks and whittled ribs,
stick fingers, weak she is Hunger's sib.
She's there in the night next to Santa's bells;
she's there in the light of the corporate trees sales.

She's shivering there in the flashing decor
of middle class ware twinkling castles galore.
Huddled in the scene of a plastic nativity,
Child of Need Soul's spiritual plea.

Few see her in the light flashing above the tiers
neon letters too bright-

"Christ was Born HERE!"

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"Christ was Born HERE!"

"Plastic Nativity" first appeared in the December 20th edition of the Seminarian last year. It was written out of my frustration with commercialization. Inside each and every one of us, there hides that same child, and that child suffers too often of spiritual starvation! At Christmas time, we exploit that child to no end for profit.

"Plastic Nativity" is a fact. We face it each year. We feed the starving child with tinsel and lights and Santa Clauses allowing profits to corporations across the country for the buying and selling of a religious holiday. We hang that old neon sign out above the earth on the day after Thanksgiving (this year a little earlier due to the fear of losing Christmas profits to the energy crunch and inflation). 'Christ was born here! Christ was born here!' And that child, like a naive tourist falls prey to its own nature and comes out in search of nourishment. But how nourishing is the plastic we feed it?

We justify our actions by saying, "at least it brings people together". But why? Why bring people together? What does it mean? If you listen close, you can hear that child in you and in all people asking the same question: Why? Is it a wonder that the child appears so emaciated in the poem? For what do we feed it? A steady diet of Mattel, Gimbels, Hallmark, first prizes for the best looking house on the block, and santa clauses on every corner and in every store is enough to kill anyone. (Continued on page 2)

PLASTIC NATIVITY CONT.

Do we wait until it kills Christmas to ask ourselves what it's all about?

A recent play written by yours truly and to be put on by my home church's Youth Group during the Christmas season bares a plot which may shed some light on this. A group of kids, faced with the realisation that the energy crunch has crunched out the lit Christmas they have been used to face the depression which may be faced by many families this year for the same reason.. A friendly janitor is very helpful in easing the kids' lowly nature by asking thiw question, "What happened on the first Christmas?" After a little bit of stumbling, the kids finally come up with an answer (helped of course by the friendly janitor). God shared a part of himself with the world. What follows is the planning of a birthday party for Christ at which the kids share a part of themselves with each other. No, they don't hold an orgy. Their gifts are simple mementos and special thing which are meaningful to them (ie. one boy gives his best paper airplane to another rather than flying it in algebra class as he usually would do). Drab, naive, simple. For kids, remember? But the idea is what is important. It attempts to feed that child.

And by the way, has anyone heard? 2000 years ago, God shared a part of himself with the earth.

R. Michael Vaughan

YOU DON'T HAVE TO LAUGH IF YOU'VE HEARD THESE.....

The temperence lecture finished is attack on drink with the words: I wish we could take all the liquor in this town and dump it in the river." After which the Choir got up and sang, "Shall we gather at the river?"

What dessert did they have on Noah's ark?

Preserved pears.

DMC Englert

IT'S GETTING COLDER

A reminder for those of you who already know, and an announcement for those of you who don't know!

The Seminarian Community Council continues to sell LTS jackets via the bookstore. The price is \$13.75, cash only!! Sizes available are medium, large and extra large. If you take a small size please leave your name with Kitty in the bookstore and I will order one for you. (I cannot guarantee the price of jackets ordered)

Don't get caught in the cold!!!!

Randy C. Rossman

CHRISTMAS CAROLLING

The Seminary Community has been invited once again to join in Christmas carolling in downtown Lancaster. On December 11th, LTS will sing from 7-8 pm. Everyone will meet at the Seminary at 6:30 for transportation to downtown Lancaster. Our evening of singing will begin in Penn Square and it should be a lot of fun. Anyone who wishes to sing should come and help us all to sing of this beautiful season of the year. Following the carolling, everyone is invited to Tom and Nancie Raan's home on Pine St. for refreshments. Let's all come together for this event and let our voices SING!

Tyson Frey

PRAYER CONCERNS

In addition to the concerns I shared last week, of Marc Wessels and of Marie Grayson, I t has been brought to my attention that Bill Hoch is currently on the 4th floor of St. Joseph's hospital, having entered for testing on Thursday of last week.

Let us keep these and all our fellow students in mind as we pass through these few weeks remaining until the semester's end and the celebrative time of Christmas.

DLM

EVALENGISM
Part 5

This is the final article in a series on evangelism, and I hope to deal with conversion and summarize evangelism for all of us. If we ask for a biblical concept of conversion, Lesslie Newbigin suggests, "Conversion in this context is a turning round in order to participate by faith in a new reality that is the true future of the whole creation. It is not in the first place either saving one's own soul or joining a society. It is these things only secondarily because the new reality is one in which every soul is precious, and because there is a society that is the first fruit and sign of the new reality. If either of these things is put at the center, distortion follows. Biblically understood, conversion means being so turned round that one's face is towards that summing up of all things in Christ that is promised, and of which the resurrection of Jesus is the sign and first fruit. It means being caught up into the activity of God that is directed to that end."

It was this "turning round" that the early Christians hoped for, when they preached the Good News of Jesus Christ. The early Christian evangelists were directing their message to people that knew nothing about Jesus, and it was their sincere wish that people would be transformed by the power of the love of Christ. As this sharing took place, it was felt that people would sense the freedom that Jesus gave to the world. The life and teachings of Jesus were worth proclaiming and the many new Christians expected results. There was no fear of being wrong in their proclamation, for they sensed the rightness of it.

Conversion is a term that frightens many people who are used to the term salvation. The term salvation could be substituted for conversion. When Christ dealt with repentance and discipleship he was dealing with the idea of conversion. Hosea 6:1 refers to returning to the Lord and this is at the heart

of conversion. Turning to God is conversion and this may be found in the Old Testament and the New Testament. Within the New Testament, Paul Loeffler suggests, "Conversion is in each case essentially commitment to Christ, or more precisely to the Lord (kyrios)."

There was a very strong feeling among early Christian evangelists, that conversion was a turning toward God and neighbor. Fellowship was a very important part of the Christian faith. Concern for others became paramount, as one matured in Christian love and understanding. The New Testament speaks of the many instances where sharing was promoted. Not only was one's own life changed, but the lives of others were changed in a conversion. For the early evangelists, the need for transforming lives was great and at the heart of their faith. This idea was true for them and it suggests a lot to us.

This segment on evangelism is the last in my series and I hope that many of us have seen evangelism in a new light. Evangelism goes far beyond the door knocking that scares us to death. It is a very basic part of how we live as Christians. A glimpse was captured of the many early Christians who took evangelism seriously. They were people who had their lives transformed by the Good News proclaimed by Jesus Christ. Salvation was given to all by this man Jesus and it had to be proclaimed to the unknown. With a purpose in their hearts, Christians throughout many centuries have sought the conversion of the unknown masses of people. Confident that God would give them guidance, these believers struggled to and earnestly proclaimed their love for the Christ. Each of us has the ability to deal with evangelism, whether it be in the proclaiming, teaching, fellowshiping, or worshipping of God's love for us. To deny the gifts God has given us would be to deny the Christ that came for us. Evangelism is for all of us! The need to live the Good News of Jesus with others is at the base of our faith. All of us have been commissioned to make disciples of all people. Can we as Christians deny our Lord?

Tyson L. Frey

CAMPUS TOURS ANNOUNCED!

For all of you who are interested in learning more bout the highlights of the LTS campus, SSC is not sponsoring a tour on Monday morings at 4 a.m. The tour has been devised and will be conducted by the noted campusologist, Dr. Hiram F. Tire of the Leasure Institute of Puddle Corners, Pa. Dr. Tire^{ch}s specialty is the study of rare snippets of campus lore, and for^{ch} his first tour he will be focusing the discussion upon little-known features in our midst.

After meeting "under the eagles" on the Lark Academis Building, the tour will proceed to the Antiquities Room--formerly the "Center for Bicycle Readiness"--in Bowman Hall. There, Dr. Tire will unveil the msueum's latest aquisition, the pericope from the ancient vessel, the S.S. Amphictony, redently discovered in the Sea of Reeds.

The tour will then form a plumb line as they stroll to Richards Hall. There, Dr. Tire will demonstate the improvements made in 10^{ch} Cnetury B.C.E. Jerusalem's sanitation system by showing us the famous bath-sheba. This tub-like basin was designed for roof-top bathing, and in sue up until the time of the Divided Kingdom. It is currently the home of two frisky sea otters.

After tea and scones at the Lower Level Lounge of the Library (also known as the "Whispering Gallery"), we will all check our mailboxes before exploring the Chapel. For many, this will be a first visit; and therefore, Dr. Tire will center his short message upom "The Influence of Reform-ation Thought upon the use of Wooden Boxes in Lecurns".

The Seminarian is pleased to announce that Dr. Tire's book, Right in Your Own Front Quad, will be on sale after the tour, and Dr. Tire will be available for autographs. We hope to see you all there!

Martin F. Tours
alias John Dalles

T'was three weeks before finals and during a class this question was raised and asked of James Glasse, "What happens on campus while you are away, we can Hartley remeber this day after day." "Well Howe should I know " was his witted reply, as he dipped his Kroehler in straight Canada Dry. "to answer that question can be a real Payne, in Ernest a Bishop might even refrain." A Fair retort offered as he stroked his Broad-head was "The Earley-bird catches the _____ instead. A word to the Wise sufficiently should be, but a word to the Weiser is hum-buggery!" The student was gRoan-ing and jumped on his Case to Ketcham in an answer in 'crimson and Lace. "If a Whalen of an answer is Peachy pray tell,/ I've got a Schwartz watch to you I could Sell. But tell me one Good- thing- your name, was it John-Christian Beer, is it Bitler or just good for a yawn?" Well Webber or not- this sure is a Ringer to go Ober dees nehms me becomes dinga-linger! But it really is not my Falk UCC, it's the Schirmer of starlight that does this to me. I'm Pickering on people as you probably can tell from their Hahn d to their Knavel, oh well, what the _____. In using your names I became ferry Fogal but Book at it dees veh, I be a local yokel who uses Softner with blueness for extra Whiting Vieth Foor cups of starch Irions really exciting! Well my Vaughn-ville routing must draw to a close butt one real McCaw wish you McSherly should knows. Whether the ground's White, Green(e) or Brown you must Sills be elated! Even over Christmas, Patty's still celebrated.(close)

I.M.A.Sfudent

I'M SURE YOU'VE ALL HEARD THIS ONE...

Two little snakes came down the gangplank of Noah's ark after the Flood and were weeping. When someone asked why, they said, "Noah told us to go furth and multiply and we can't, we're adders."

DMC Englert

Part III
SOME BASIC PRINCIPLES OF SPIRITUAL LIFE

SPIRITUAL LIFE cont.

Work as if everything depended upon God; pray as if everything depended upon you.

This favorite maxim of St Ignatius Loyola echoes for me Paul's admonition: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for God is at work in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure." (Phil. 2)

The Christian is invited and empowered to see all that he does as somehow connected with God's plan of salvation "Whatever you do, in word or work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." Salvation is the work of God acting in and through us. In this mysterious meeting of man's freedom and God's power the work of reunifying all into one family is taking place, totally the work, of God yet involving man totally in its accomplishment. To work as if everything depended upon God is not an excuse to shun responsibility. As one progresses in holiness there is a greater willingness to accept more responsibility because the grace of God touches the core of the person which is the active will, and calls one to deeper conversion, an ever more radical turning to the Will of God. God wants me to petition acts that are in accordance with His will from Him because He wants to give them to us as persons, and so we must receive them in a conscious way.

When I pray I come to God in the totality of my being-memory, intellect, will all the powers of body and soul. I come consciously into the presence of the One who has been conscious of me from all eternity. I come at His Invitation, His empowerment to respond. I come as I am when invited. God knows who I am and where I am at this moment in all my relationships with creatures and with Him. My mood, my feelings are all here in the NOW of me present. This is the Me He loves into His presence. But there is a deeper reality that makes my prayers true prayers. "The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought but the Spirit intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words." (Rom 8)

(cont. next column)

I am invited to pray out of an awareness that it is through Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit that I can pray and to see in faith that what looks like just me is really Christ praying in me.

Edwin J. Sanders, S.J.

IRAN

United States religious leaders delivered a statement on the Iranian crisis on Friday, November 30, 1979 to the U.S. and Iranian missions to the United Nations.

The statement was shared with the press at a conference at the Church Center for the United Nations. Speakers at the press conference were the Rev. William Sloane Coffin, the Riverside Church, N.Y. Dr. Randolph Nugent, Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church Dr. Richard Falk, Institute for World Order; and Sr. Blaise Lupo and the Rev. John Collins, co-directors of Clergy and Laity Concerned.

A copy of this statement is available in Rev. Allen Kroehler's office for each of us to consider at our leisure. Allen can also give you more information regarding the statement, and Clergy and Laity Concerned, of which he is the local representative.

YES, IT'S TRUE

To all of you who haven't heard about it, your illustrious editor-typist-janitor-etc. is running off with the color-coordinator. In lay terms, Don and Judy have decided to become wife and husband. What does it mean? That not only will this paper be of the stellar quality it has been in the past, but that St. Fred's UCC or wherever we wind up will have an experienced editorial staff for the weekly newsletter.

DLM

THAT REMINDS ME OF THE SEMINARY PROF who was the preacher on a special occasion after his sermon the Choir got up and sang "Some day We'll Understand" DMCE